

# **Catholic Diocese of Columbus**



## **Policies and Guidelines for Parish Youth Ministry Programs**



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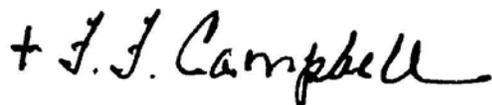
Office of the Bishop  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Youth Ministry Programs in the Diocese of Columbus play an essential role in fulfilling the Church's responsibility to proclaim the Gospel and to call all people to holiness and service. The fulfillment of this responsibility among Catholic youth occurs through many activities, catechetical formation, prayer and worship, and opportunities to serve others.

I promulgate this *Policies and Guidelines for Parish Youth Ministry Programs* manual to assist our parishes in establishing and enhancing programs for our youth. Through it, standards of quality have been updated and common direction is given. Implementation is dependent on a continued positive working relationship among those who work for and with our parishes – Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, pastors, coordinators of youth ministry, local youth ministry teams, parents, and youth.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ F. F. Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Frederick F. Campbell, D.D., Ph.D.  
Bishop of Columbus

## PREFACE



This manual contains the policies and guidelines for the youth ministry programs of the Diocese of Columbus. The policies are directives for discretionary action approved by the Bishop of Columbus. These policies are binding upon the Diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the pastors, coordinators of youth ministry, and the staff responsible for youth programs in the Diocese of Columbus. These policies take precedent over locally developed policies. Guidelines are specific recommendations issued by the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry as best practices in the Diocese of Columbus. Each sheet is clearly marked to indicate whether it is a policy or guideline.

All of our parishes comply with applicable civil and canon laws. Therefore, requirements that simply restate the substance of law are not included in this manual. Diocesan personnel procedures already addressed in other diocesan materials are also not included.

The manual is produced in loose leaf form to make it easy for you to keep the book current as changes in policies or guidelines occur. It will also enable you to include any policies adopted by the local administration (pastor, coordinator of youth ministry).

These policies and guidelines are a reflection of the shared vision of those who share in the Church's ministry with youth in the Diocese of Columbus.

Mark Butler  
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Lucia D. McQuaide  
Episcopal Moderator for Education

September 2008

## PHILOSOPHY



### **YOUTH MINISTRY** (Adapted from *Renewing the Vision*)

“As leaders in the field of the youth apostolate, your task will be to help your parishes, dioceses, associations, and movements to be truly open to the personal, social, and spiritual needs of young people. You will have to find ways of involving young people in projects and activities of formation, spirituality, and service, giving them responsibility for themselves and their work, and taking care to avoid isolating them and their apostolate from the rest of the ecclesial community. Young people need to be able to see the practical relevance of their efforts to meet the real needs of people, especially the poor and neglected. They should also be able to see that their apostolate belongs fully to the Church's mission in the world” (cf. Pope John Paul II, *Listen to the True Word of Life*, 1993.)

Three interdependent and equally important goals guide the Church's ministry with adolescents. These goals state what it means for the Catholic community to respond to the needs of young people and to involve young people in sharing their unique gifts with the larger community. They express the Church's focus for ministry with adolescents, while encouraging local creativity in developing the programs, activities, and strategies to reach these goals.

#### **Goal 1: To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.**

Ministry with adolescents helps young people learn what it means to follow Jesus Christ and to live as his disciples today, empowering them to serve others and to work toward a world built on the vision and values of the reign of God.

The challenge of discipleship—of following Jesus—is at the heart of the Church's mission. All ministries with adolescents must be directed toward presenting young people with the Good News of Jesus Christ and inviting and challenging them to become his disciples. For this reason, catechesis is an essential component of youth ministry and one that needs renewed emphasis. If we are to succeed, we must offer young people a spiritually challenging and world-shaping vision that meets their hunger for the chance to participate in a worthy adventure.

We are confident that young people will commit themselves totally to Jesus Christ, who will ask everything from them and give everything in return. We need to provide concrete ways by which the demands, excitement, and adventure of being a disciple of Jesus Christ can be personally experienced by adolescents—where they tax and test their resources and where they stretch their present capacities and skills to the limits. Young people need to have a true opportunity for exploring what discipleship ultimately involves.

## **PHILOSOPHY**



### **YOUTH MINISTRY (Continued)**

This should include a partnership between youth ministers and other parish and diocesan ministries, offering young people an understanding of vocation that includes Christian marriage, generous single life, priesthood, religious life, diaconate, and lay ministry. Young people need to know and be known by the Church's ministers if they are to better understand how God is calling them to live as disciples. Faith-filled example by these ministers and active encouragement and invitations to consider a vocation to the priesthood and consecrated life will enable more to respond. Our young people will become truly convinced that "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). Growth in discipleship is not about offering a particular program; it is the goal of all our efforts.

#### **Goal 2: To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.**

Young people experience the Catholic community of faith at home, in the parish (especially in youth ministry programs), in Catholic schools, and in other organizations serving youth. Ministry with adolescents recognizes the importance of each of these faith communities in helping young people grow in faith as they experience life in community and actively participate in the mission of Jesus Christ and his Church.

#### **The Family Community—the Church of the Home**

We believe that family life is sacred because family relationships confirm and deepen family members' union with God and allow God's Spirit to work through them. The profound and ordinary moments of daily life are the threads from which families can weave a pattern of holiness. Adolescents need to experience the Catholic faith at home and participate in the Lord's mission with their families.

Adolescents enhance family life with their love and faith. The new understandings and skills they bring home from parish and school programs can enrich family life. Their growth in faith and active participation in parish life can encourage the entire family to make the Catholic faith central in their lives. The Church can contribute significantly toward strong, life-shaping families

## **PHILOSOPHY**



### **YOUTH MINISTRY (Continued)**

for young people by equipping, supporting, and encouraging families with adolescents to engage in family faith conversations; to teach moral values; to develop healthy relationships and use good communication skills; to celebrate family rituals; to pray together; to participate in shared service activities; to explore and discuss vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life; and to nurture close parental relationships and parental faith. One of the most important tasks for the Church today is to promote the faith growth of families by encouraging families to share, celebrate, and live their faith at home and in the world.

#### **The Parish Community**

Parishes are communities of faith, of action, and of hope. They are where the Gospel is proclaimed and celebrated, where believers are formed and sent to renew the earth. Parishes are the home of the Christian community; they are the heart of our Church. Parishes are the place where God's people meet Jesus in word and sacrament and come in touch with the source of the Church's life. The parish community has a special role in promoting participation in the life, mission, and work of the faith community.

First, parishes "should be a place where [young people] are welcomed, grow in Jesus Christ, and minister side by side with the adults of the community" (A Message to Youth). In parishes, young people should feel a sense of belonging and acceptance as full-fledged members of the community. Young people are more likely to gain a sense of identity in the community if they are regarded as full-fledged members.

Second, parishes "should have programs for [young people] that recognize [their] special talents and role in the life of the Church. [They] bring to the parish community youthfulness, energy, vitality, hopefulness, and vision" (ibid). In parishes, young people need to have a wide variety of opportunities to use their gifts and to express their faith through meaningful roles. They will develop a spirit of commitment within a community only through actual involvement in the many ways the Church exercises and carries out its mission. Especially crucial is the interaction with those who have made a lifetime commitment to serving the Church as priests, sisters, brothers, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers; young people need to know that such service is

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### **YOUTH MINISTRY (Continued)**

both rewarding and fulfilling.

Third, if parishes are to be worthy of the loyalty and active participation of youth, they will need to become "youth-friendly" communities in which youth have a conspicuous presence in parish life. These are parish communities that value young people—welcoming them into their midst; listening to them; responding to their needs; supporting them with prayer, time, facilities, and money. These are parish communities that see young people as resources—recognizing and empowering their gifts and talents, giving them meaningful roles in leadership and ministry, and encouraging their contributions. These are parish communities that provide young people with opportunities for intergenerational relationships—developing relationships with adults who serve as role models and mentors. In short, "youth-friendly" parish communities make a commitment to young people and their growth.

### **The Catholic School Community**

As a faith community, Catholic schools provide young people with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith, to experience life in a Christian community, to participate actively in the mission of Jesus Christ and his Church, and to celebrate their Catholic faith. Catholic schools create a living faith community in which young people are empowered to utilize their gifts and talents and to live their faith through a variety of meaningful roles in the school, the parish, and in the Church at large. Catholic schools provide a unique opportunity for young people to experience the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to bring Catholic beliefs and values into their lives and the world. Campus ministry provides an essential element in the ministerial life of the Catholic school community and campus ministry fosters the faith development of young people and the entire school community through effective religious education and a variety of programs and activities, such as service projects, retreats, prayer services and liturgies, spiritual formation programs, leadership training, peer ministry, and vocation ministry that includes education, encouragement, and invitation.

In partnership with parents and parishes, Catholic schools prepare young people to become full and active members of the Catholic Church. Families, parishes, and Catholic schools

# PHILOSOPHY



## **YOUTH MINISTRY (Continued)**

continuously need to find ways to strengthen this partnership so that the lives of all young people are enriched and the resources of the Catholic community are wisely used. Some of these activities can be adapted for parish youth ministry.

### **The Youth-Serving Organizational Community**

Catholic leaders in certain youth-serving organizations, both within and outside of parishes, have a unique opportunity of reaching Catholic adolescents and bringing them into communion with the greater Catholic community. Through church-developed religious programs and activities, Catholic lay leaders and chaplains/moderators guide youth and act as mentors in their faith development, particularly in learning the gospel message and the basic teachings of the Church. These organizations are communities that help young people deepen their relationship with God and develop a spirit of joyful giving. These organizations afford an environment where adolescents can learn and can practice leadership skills and can focus on ethical decision making. Often, these organizations are able to reach at-risk youth and to provide much needed care and support. Wherever possible, it is important that these organizations provide adolescents the opportunity to participate in the life of their parish and diocese.

### **Goal 3: To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.**

Ministry with adolescents promotes the growth of healthy, competent, caring, and faith-filled Catholic young people. The Church is concerned for the whole person, addressing the young people's spiritual needs in the context of his or her whole life. Ministry with adolescents fosters positive adolescent development and growth in both Christian discipleship and Catholic identity. Promoting the growth of young and older adolescents means addressing their unique developmental, social, and religious needs and nurturing the qualities or assets necessary for positive development. It also means addressing the objective obstacles to healthy growth that affect the lives of so many young people, such as poverty, racial discrimination, and social injustice, as well as the subjective obstacles to healthy growth such as the loss of a sense of sin, the influence of values promoted by the secular media, and the negative impact of the consumer mentality.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

In this manual, the term “youth ministry” pertains to the parish’s pastoral and catechetical ministry with adolescents of high school age. Additional programs included within the term “youth ministry” are:

- Interparochial youth ministry events or gatherings
- Pastoral and catechetical ministry with adolescents in Middle School or Junior High School (if separate from the Parish School of Religion)
- Programs preparing youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation (if separate from the Parish School of Religion and/or other parish programs addressing sacrament preparation or Christian initiation)
- Parish-based Recreation Programs (all levels and activities)
- Catholic Chartered Units of the Boy Scouts of America (all levels)
- Youth-Serving Organizations (Girl Scouts of the USA, Catholic Youth Summer Camp, Inc. [CYSC], etc.) using parish, school, or diocesan facilities (all levels)



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**YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

**THEMES OF A COMPREHENSIVE VISION FOR YOUTH MINISTRY** (From *Renewing the Vision*)

**Developmentally Appropriate**

Human development and growth in faith is a lifelong journey. Renewing the Vision builds upon the growth nurtured in childhood and provides a foundation for continuing growth in young adulthood. Effective ministry with adolescents provides developmentally appropriate experiences, programs, activities, strategies, resources, content, and processes to address the unique developmental and social needs of young and older adolescents both as individuals and as members of families. This approach responds to adolescents' unique needs, focuses ministry efforts, and establishes realistic expectations for growth during adolescence.

**Family Friendly**

Ministry with adolescents recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the faith formation of young people and that the parish and Catholic school share in it. The home is a primary context for sharing, celebrating, and living the Catholic faith, and we are partners with parents in developing the faith life of their adolescent children. The Church can contribute significantly toward strong, life-shaping families for young people. The changes in family life, such as the increasing diversity in family structure, the pressures of family time and commitments, and the changing economic situation, challenge us to respond to family needs and to develop a variety of approaches, programs, activities, and strategies to reach out to families.

**Intergenerational**

Ministry with adolescents recognizes the importance of the intergenerational faith community in sharing faith and promoting healthy growth in adolescents. Meaningful involvement in parish life and the development of intergenerational relationships provide young people with rich resources to learn the story of the Catholic faith experientially and to develop a sense of belonging to the Church. Ministry with adolescents can incorporate young people into the intergenerational opportunities already available in the parish community, identify and develop leadership opportunities in the parish for young people, and create intergenerational support networks and mentoring relationships. Age-specific programs can be transformed into intergenerational programming and new intergenerational programs that incorporate young people can be developed.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **Multicultural**

Adolescents today are growing up in a culturally diverse society. The perceived image of the United States has shifted from a melting pot to a multihued tapestry. The strength and beauty of the tapestry lie in the diverse colors and textures of its component threads—the values and traditions claimed by the different racial and ethnic groups that constitute the people of the United States. Ministry with adolescents is multicultural when it focuses on a specialized ministry to youth of particular racial and ethnic cultures and promotes multicultural awareness among all youth. First, ministry with adolescents recognizes, values, and responds to the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and experiences that exist among adolescents and develops culturally responsive and inclusive programming to address these needs. Second, all ministry with adolescents needs to incorporate ethnic traditions, values, and rituals into ministerial programming; teach about the variety of ethnic cultures in the Catholic Church; provide opportunities for crosscultural experiences; and foster acceptance and respect for cultural diversity.

#### **Community-wide Collaboration**

The Church's concern for the civic community includes advocacy on behalf of young people when public issues that affect their lives need to be addressed. Ministry with adolescents involves creating healthier civic communities for all young people. This involves networking with leaders in congregations of diverse faith traditions, public schools, youth-serving agencies, and community organizations to nurture a shared commitment to promoting healthy adolescent development and a healthy community; to develop mutual respect and understanding; to share resources; and to plan community-wide efforts and programs. Building these relationships can open doors for sharing resources and co-sponsoring training, programs, and advocacy efforts.

#### **Leadership**

Ministry with adolescents mobilizes all of the resources of the faith community in a comprehensive and integrated approach: Part of the vision of youth ministry is to present to youth the richness of the person of Christ, which perhaps exceeds the ability of one person to capture, but which might be effected by the collective ministry of the many persons who make up the Church. This approach involves a wide diversity of adult and youth leaders in a variety of roles necessary for comprehensive ministry. Ministry coordinators have a central role in facilitating the people, programming, and resources of the faith community on behalf of a comprehensive ministry effort with adolescents. Coordination is stewardship—overseeing the resources of the community so that they are used wisely in ministry with adolescents.



## **100.11 (Cont'd)**

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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **Flexible and Adaptable Programming**

Ministry with adolescents creates flexible and adaptable program structures that address the changing needs and life situations of today's young people and their families within a particular community. The comprehensive approach incorporates the following elements in developing ministry programming for adolescents:

- a diversity of program settings
- age-specific programs for young and older adolescents
- family-centered programs for the entire family, for parents, for foster parents, for grandparents raising children, adolescents
- intergenerational parish programs
- community-wide programs
- a balanced mix of programs, activities, and strategies that address the eight components of comprehensive ministry
- a variety of approaches to reach all adolescents and their families, including parish, school, and community-wide programs
- small-group programs and small ecclesial community experiences
- mentoring programs and activities, independent or self-directed programs
- a variety of scheduling options and program settings to respond to the reality of the busy lives and commitments of adolescents and their families
- use of current technology to facilitate communication in program development and implementation.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH MINISTRY**

Renewing the Vision also identifies eight components of youth ministry, each of which is an expression of the ministry of the Christian community to young people. In a program of total youth ministry, parishes combine these components.

- Advocacy – enables young people by giving them a voice and calling them to responsibility and accountability around issues that affect them and their future.
- Catechesis – integrates knowledge of the Catholic faith with the development of practical skills for living the Catholic faith in today's world.
- Community Life – provides avenues for adolescents to participate as members of the faith community and opportunities for the faith community to acknowledge, celebrate and value its adolescent members.
- Evangelization – calls young people to be evangelizers of other young people, their families and the community.
- Justice and Service – involves adolescents, their families and parish communities in actions of direct service to those in need and in efforts to address the causes of injustice and inequity and nurtures a lifelong commitment to service and justice involvement.
- Leadership Development – utilizes adult and adolescent leaders in the variety of leadership roles necessary for comprehensive ministry.
- Pastoral Care – promotes positive adolescent and family development, provides care and guidance, challenges systems that are obstacles to positive development, and maintains a contact/referral list to connect youth and their families to support services as needed.
- Prayer and Worship – celebrates and deepens young people's relationship with Jesus Christ through communal prayer and liturgical experiences.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **SERVICE ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH**

Our faith calls us to work for justice; to serve those in need; to pursue peace; and to defend the life, dignity, and rights of all our sisters and brothers. This is the call of Jesus, the urging of his spirit, the challenge of the prophets, and the living tradition of our Church.

The ministry of justice and service nurtures in young people a social consciousness and a commitment to a life of justice and service rooted in their faith in Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures, and in Catholic social teaching; enables young people to work for justice by concrete efforts to address the causes of human suffering; and infuses the concepts of justice, peace, and human dignity into all ministry efforts.

In keeping with the commitment of Catholic youth ministry to educate youth for Christian service, each youth ministry program should provide opportunities for youth to participate in service activities and service programs of the diocese, their parishes, and local community organizations.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **ACCESSIBILITY OF COUNSELING REGARDING CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION**

Youth ministry programs should provide their students with access to counseling regarding the Catholic tradition of conscientious objection as noted in the 1983 pastoral *The Challenge of Peace* and to make known to youth the availability of this counseling.



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### YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

#### **SYSTEMATIC CATECHESIS**

“[Catechesis] must be systematic, not improvised but programmed to reach a precise goal.” (John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 1979, 21.) To facilitate a systematic catechesis, adolescent catechesis in all programs, must compliment and follow the diocesan *Religion Graded Course of Study* and reflect the scope and sequence set forth in the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*.



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**YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

**THE MINISTRY OF CATECHESIS (Adapted from *Renewing the Vision*)**

"Quite early on, the name catechesis was given to the totality of the church's efforts to make disciples, to help people believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so that believing they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the body of Christ" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 4).

The ministry of catechesis helps adolescents develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and the Christian community and increase their knowledge of the core content of the Catholic faith. The ministry of catechesis also helps young people enrich and expand their understanding of the Scriptures and the sacred tradition and their application to life today, and live more faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ in their daily lives, especially through a life of prayer, justice and loving service. Genuine faith is a total response of the whole person - mind, heart and will. The ministry of catechesis fosters growth in Catholic faith in all three dimensions - trusting (heart), knowing and believing (mind), and doing (will). The goal should be to have all Catholic youth involved in some program of catechesis.

The ministry of catechesis with adolescents has several distinct features that give direction to catechetical programming. Specifically, catechesis with adolescents:

- Recognizes that faith development is lifelong and therefore provides developmentally appropriate content and processes around key themes of the Catholic faith that are responsive to the age-appropriate needs, interests and concerns of young and older adolescents.
- Teaches the core content of the Catholic faith as presented in the Catechism of the Catholic Church - the profession of faith, celebration of the Christian mystery, life in Christ and Christian prayer - in order to provide a solid foundation for continued growth in faith.
- Integrates knowledge of the Catholic faith with the development of practical skills for living the Catholic faith in today's world.
- Utilizes the life experience of adolescents, fostering a shared dialogue between the life of the adolescent - with its joys, struggles, questions, concerns and hopes - and the wisdom of the Catholic faith.



## **130.31 (Cont'd)**

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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

- Engages adolescents in the learning process by incorporating a variety of learning methods and activities through which adolescents can explore and learn important religious concepts of the Scriptures and Catholic faith. A variety of learning approaches keeps interest alive among adolescents and responds to their different learning styles.
- Involves group participation in an environment that is characterized by warmth, trust, acceptance and care, so that young people can hear and respond to God's call. This fosters the freedom to search and question, to express one's own point of view and to respond in faith to that call.
- Provides for real-life application of learning by helping adolescents apply their learning to living more faithfully as Catholic adolescents - considering the next steps that they will take and the obstacles that they will face.
- Promotes family faith development through parish and school programs by providing parent-education programs and resources, by incorporating a family perspective in catechetical programming and by providing parent-adolescent and intergenerational catechetical programming.
- Recognizes and celebrates multicultural diversity by including stories, songs, dances, feasts, values, rituals, saints and heroes from the rich heritage of various cultures.
- Incorporates a variety of program approaches, including parish and school programs, small-group programs, activities, mentoring programs, and independent or self-directed programs or activities.
- Explicitly invites young people to explore the possibility of a personal call to ministry and the beauty of the total gift of self for the sake of the kingdom.

The ministry of catechesis most effectively promotes the faith development of young and older adolescents when the curriculum is focused on important faith themes drawn from the teachings of the church and on the developmental needs and life experiences of adolescents.



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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS FOR CATECHETICAL PROGRAMS**

It is the responsibility of the diocese to recommend catechetical curricula and textbooks (*National Directory for Catechesis* #59). The Office for Religious Education and Catechesis determines and publishes a list of approved religion textbooks in accordance with the diocesan *Religion Graded Course of Study* that reflect the scope and sequence set forth in the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age*.

While textbooks are not required for the catechetical component of a comprehensive youth ministry, any textbooks used as a primary resource must be on the approved list.



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### YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

#### **CURRICULUM: HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Formal instruction in the different aspects of human growth and development is included in the *Religion Graded Courses of Study*. In alignment with the Diocesan philosophy for youth ministry, instruction must be grounded in Catholic theology and follow the guidelines set forth in *Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living: Guidelines for Curriculum Design and Publication*.

It is recommended that communication to and involvement of parents be an integral part of this curriculum.



POLICY

GUIDELINE

**YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

**YOUTH AND THE SUNDAY MASS**

(Adapted from *Youth and Sunday Mass: Preparing Youth for Liturgy and Preparing the Liturgy Well*, Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)

“Liturgical actions are not private actions but celebrations of the Church itself, which is ‘the sacrament of unity,’ namely, a holy people assembled and ordered under the bishops...” (CIC cann. 837 §1)

The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is an act of Christ and his Body, the Church. Anything that would divide the Body of Christ is contradictory to the Eucharist. A separate Sunday youth Mass deprives the parish community of the gifts of young people and deprives young people of inclusion in the broader, intergenerational, community of faith.

Special liturgies for youth run counter to what we believe about the Eucharist, the Church does not ordinarily provide special Masses on Sunday for any particular age or interest group,

All liturgies should welcome young people, as all people. If "youth-friendly" means appropriate music, a relevant homily understandable to all ages, and including young people in liturgical roles, then all will benefit.

However, if "youth-friendly" is taken to mean liturgies where the liturgical roles, music and homily are principally, or even exclusively, directed toward youth, the inclusive nature of the liturgy is lost.

Two very influential elements of the liturgy for youth are preaching and music. These two elements are in need of particular attention if we hope to provide an experience of worship that is meaningful for youth, as they exist within the Body of Christ.

It should be remembered that the youth are not the future of the Church. They are just as much the present as other generations are and should be welcomed as such.



## **100.40 (Cont'd)**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **STRATEGIES FOR THOSE WHO WORK WITH YOUTH**

- Be well formed in the liturgy and integrate its richness into your ministry.
- Attend workshops, study the liturgy, and deepen both your understanding and appreciation of it.
- Regularly include in your ministry prayer experiences and activities that help young people to connect to the symbols, actions, and signs of the liturgy.
- Lead young people in preparation for and reflection upon the liturgy, or find someone who can do this well.
- During youth meetings, or in intergenerational groups, lead young people in discussion and reflection that will help them to actively participate in the celebration of the Eucharist and connect the liturgy with their lives.
- Connect liturgy with life through comprehensive youth ministry.
- Integrate youth into the life and ministries of the faith community.

#### **STRATEGIES FOR THOSE PREPARING THE LITURGY**

- Prepare every celebration with the full assembly in mind, children, young people, and adults.
- Include youth in homily and liturgical preparation teams.
- Include youth in a variety of liturgical roles.



## 100.41

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

#### **YOUTH AND LITURGICAL ROLES**

All ministry is a service to the people of God. Liturgical roles are viewed as a service to the assembly and not as an honor for the individual. No one who meets the criterion for these roles should be purposefully excluded.

Neither Canon Law nor liturgical law expressly lists an age requirement for the various liturgical roles. What is important is that those of any age who fulfill these roles are 1) Part of the assembly (they worship regularly in the community); 2) Possess the talent and ability required by these various roles; 3) Strive to lead a Christian life; and 4) Are well trained in the roles following the diocesan guidelines. Ultimately, it is the pastor's responsibility to judge the suitability of a person to a given liturgical role as well as guaranteeing that no qualifying segment of the parish community is excluded from these roles.

An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be fully initiated into the Church and in good standing with the Church. *Immensae Caritas* says the following regarding the choice of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion that they "... distinguish himself or herself by a Christian life, faith and morals: striving to be worthy of this great office; cultivating devotion to the holy Eucharist and acting as an example to the other faithful by piety and reverence for this most holy Sacrament of the altar." (VI)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are just that, "extra" or beyond the ordinary ministers (priests, deacons, installed acolytes.) Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are not required, but should be prepared in the case that not enough ordinary ministers are present.

It is important to note that all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are appointed by the Bishop for a period of two years and are to be commissioned. This means that at least every two years a letter should be sent to the Bishop with the names of potential new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion as well as those who wish to be recommissioned. The Bishop will then reply to the request. These instructions are more completely outlined on pp. 4-5 of the Diocese of Columbus Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.



## **100.42**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **SCHEDULING OF ACTIVITIES - RESTRICTIONS**

Scheduling of youth ministry activities on Sunday mornings and on the days of the Easter Triduum, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, unless explicitly permitted by the pastor, is prohibited.



## **100.50**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

#### **COLLABORATION WITH HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS MINISTRY**

The youth ministry staff at feeder parishes should explore avenues for collaboration with the campus ministry programs at the appropriate diocesan High School(s).

Coordinators of youth ministry must contact the principal in order to facilitate any school visits, participation in school activities, and the formation of a parish/school plan for youth ministry collaboration.

The principal has full discretion regarding school facilities, faculty, staff, and students.



## **200.10**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **POLICY REGARDING CIVILIAN CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS**

##### **Clergy, Employees, and Applicants to Clerical Formation**

All clergy serving in the Diocese of Columbus; all parish, school, and diocesan employees; and all applicants to formation for the priesthood or permanent diaconate, regardless of their level of contact with children and youth, are required to complete a civilian criminal background check and participate in a *Protecting God's Children* training session. This policy is applicable to lay employees, professed religious, clergy, and clergy candidates.

##### **Catholic School Volunteers and Volunteers in Parish Programs/Ministries for Children and Youth**

Every volunteer in a program or ministry for children and youth, regardless of their level of contact with children and youth, is required to complete a civilian criminal background check and participate in a *Protecting God's Children* training session. Duration of service does not mitigate compliance with this policy.

*Examples: Catholic School volunteers, Parish School of Religion (PSR) volunteers, youth ministry volunteers, field-trip chaperones and drivers, Scout leaders, coaches and other recreation volunteers, Vacation Bible School volunteers, Children's Liturgy of the Word volunteers, pre-school volunteers, nursery volunteers*

##### **Volunteers Working with Children and Youth in Other Parish Programs/Ministries**

Volunteers for other parish programs or ministries who have been delegated care, custody, or control of children and youth are required to complete a criminal background check and participate in a *Protecting God's Children* training session. Duration of service does not mitigate compliance with this policy.

*Examples: Parish festival volunteers staffing activities for children/youth, volunteer choir director (if choir includes children and/or youth), service coordinators (if service programs include children or youth)*



## **200.10 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **Other Parish Volunteers and Adults**

Although they are not required to do so by diocesan policy, the Diocese of Columbus strongly encourages all other parish volunteers to complete civilian criminal background checks and attend *Protecting God's Children* training sessions. All parents and other interested adults are encouraged to attend a *Protecting God's Children* training session. The safety of children and young people is best assured when all adults have been trained and understand how to build a safe environment for children.

*Examples: Lectors, ushers, festival workers, choir members, and so forth.*

#### **Civilian Criminal Background Checks for New Clergy, Parish Employees, Parish and School Volunteers, and Applicants to Clerical Formation**

Civilian criminal background checks are completed through the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and must be completed by the first day of one's incardination (for a priest or deacon arriving to serve in this diocese from another diocese), employment, or service to the parish or school. Anyone formally applying to be a candidate for the priesthood or permanent diaconate must have a completed criminal background check completed through the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) prior to acceptance into formal formation. Anyone who has not been a legal resident of Ohio for the past consecutive 5-years is required to complete a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) civilian criminal background check. An FBI civilian criminal background check must at least be in process by the first day of one's employment or service to the parish or school.

Copies or transfers of completed civilian criminal background checks are only accepted from one parish or school in the Diocese of Columbus to another parish or school in the Diocese of Columbus. Copies of completed civilian background checks from individuals or other institutions are not acceptable.

A new background check must be conducted if a cleric, employee, volunteer, or clerical candidate has a significant (more than 1½ years) gap in their employment, service, or formation in the diocese.



## **200.10 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **Civilian Criminal Background Checks for Catholic School Employees**

All Catholic school employees must complete civilian criminal background checks conducted by both the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). These checks must be completed every five years.

#### **Disqualifying Offenses**

Parishes and schools should exercise prudence when reviewing any offenses that are identified by a civilian criminal background check. Offenses that would prevent someone from serving in programs and ministries with children or youth include, but are not limited to:

- Abduction
- Aggravated assault
- Aggravated burglary
- Aggravated menacing
- Aggravated murder; specific intent to cause death
- Aggravated robbery
- Assault
- Burglary
- Carrying concealed weapons
- Child enticement
- Child stealing
- Compelling prostitution
- Contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child
- Corrupting another with drugs
- Corruption of a minor
- Disseminating matter harmful to juveniles
- Domestic violence
- Endangering children
- Failing to provide for functionally impaired person
- Felonious assault
- Felonious sexual penetration
- Funding of drug or marijuana trafficking
- Gross sexual imposition
- Having a weapon while under a disability
- Illegal administration or distribution of anabolic steroids
- Illegal manufacture of drugs or cultivation of marijuana
- Illegal use of a minor in nudity oriented material or performance
- Impositioning (now importuning)
- Improperly discharging a weapon at or near a school or dwelling
- Interference with custody
- Involuntary manslaughter
- Kidnapping
- Murder
- Pandering obscenity
- Pandering obscenity involving a minor
- Pandering sexually oriented matter involving a minor
- Patient abuse, neglect
- Placing harmful objects in food or confection
- Possession of drugs (that is not a minor drug possession offense)
- Procuring
- Promoting prostitution (children)
- Prostitution: after positive HIV test
- Public indecency
- Rape
- Robbery
- Sexual battery
- Sexual imposition
- Trafficking in drugs
- Unlawful abortion
- Voluntary manslaughter
- Voyeurism



## **200.10 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **Child Protection Training for Clergy, Employees, Volunteers, and Clergy Applicants**

Although it is preferable for new clergy, employees, volunteers, and clergy applicants to have attended a *Protecting God's Children* training session prior to working with children and youth, they have a grace period of up to six-weeks from their start date to attend a *Protecting God's Children* training session. If this grace period is needed, supervisors are to verify that the new employee or volunteer is pre-registered for a scheduled *Protecting God's Children* session by the first day of their work with children or youth. Special care must be taken to ensure that short-term volunteers receive this training in a timely manner that will properly prepare them for their service.

The *Protecting God's Children* program includes not only information on the scope of child sexual abuse, but also contains a plan for its prevention at parishes and schools. Individuals that have attended child sexual abuse awareness programs from other institutions are still required to attend a *Protecting God's Children* training session unless he or she can provide documentation that the previously attended program covered the same subject material and the Chancery Office grants approval.

Persons that have participated in a *Protecting God's Children* program in another diocese can request that their former diocese transfer their training record to the Diocese of Columbus.

If an employee or volunteer moves from a parish or school in the Diocese of Columbus to another parish or school in the Diocese of Columbus, the new parish or school should notify the diocese to request that the training record of the employee or volunteer be transferred.

Due to the sensitive nature of the *Protecting God's Children* program, some victims of child sexual abuse may not feel comfortable attending a *Protecting God's Children* training session. Anyone in this particular situation may request to receive the materials needed for child protection training in an alternate way. These requests are made through the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. All requests for alternate child protection training for victims of child sexual abuse are kept confidential.



## **200.10 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **Child Protection Continuing Education for Clergy and Other Personnel**

In addition to attending a *Protecting God's Children* training session, some clergy, employees, and volunteers are also required to receive continuing education for child sexual abuse prevention. This continuing education is provided in monthly training bulletins generated by Virtus. Persons in the following positions, whether paid or volunteer, are required to participate in this continuing education process: priests, deacons, seminarians, diaconate students, principals, assistant principals, directors or coordinators of religious education, and directors/coordinators of youth ministry. These individuals are encouraged to disseminate this information among their staff and volunteers.

Other individuals interested in participating in the continuing education process should contact the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

#### **Authority to Interpret This Policy**

Interpreting of this policy in unique circumstances or its application in unclear situations shall be made by or at least receive the prior approval of the Vicar General or his delegate.



## **200.20**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Child abuse is any non-accidental action that harms a child – whether physical, emotional, sexual or by neglect. That includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in sexual activity with a child;
- Denial of proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care, or other care necessary for the child's health;
- Use of restraint procedures on a child that cause injury or pain;
- Administration of prescription drugs or medication without the ongoing supervision of a licensed physician;
- Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances;
- Commission of any act, other than by accident that threatens or results in any injury or in death to the child.

Every member of the youth ministry team and parish staff shall immediately report any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. In the State of Ohio, reports of child abuse/neglect are made to the county agencies of the Department of Job and Family Services / Public Children Services.

The following are the contact numbers for reporting child abuse in the 23 counties of the Diocese of Columbus:

Coshocton County: (740) 622-1020  
Delaware County: (740) 833-2300  
Fairfield County: (740) 653-4060  
Fayette County: (740) 335-0350  
Franklin County: (614) 229-7000  
Hardin County: (419) 675-1130  
Hocking County: (740) 385-4168  
Holmes County: (330) 674-1111  
Jackson County: (740) 286-4181  
Knox County: (740) 392-5437  
Licking County: (740) 349-6333  
Madison County: (740) 852-4770

Marion County: (740) 389-2317  
Morrow County: (419) 947-9111  
Muskingum County: (740) 455-6710  
Perry County: (740) 342-3836  
Pickaway County: (740) 474-3105  
Pike County: (740) 947-5080  
Ross County: (740) 702-4453  
Scioto County: (740) 456-4164  
Tuscarawas County: (330) 339-7791  
Union County: (937) 644-1010  
Vinton County: (740) 596-2571



## **200.20 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

If a county agency is unavailable for any reason, the county sheriff's office is always available for assistance. In the case of an emergency, please call 911.

In addition to contacting the appropriate county agency, any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest, deacon or other Church personnel shall also be immediately reported to the Diocesan Victims' Assistance Coordinator, the Rev. Msgr. Stephan J. Moloney, toll-free at 1-866-448-0217 or [helpisavailable@colsdio.org](mailto:helpisavailable@colsdio.org).

It is the goal of the Diocese of Columbus to make the Church a place of safety: A place of prayer, ministry, and comfort. Everyone who enters our churches, schools, or facilities must be confident in this. Not one child or young person should suffer from abuse while at Church. In order to assure the safety of our children and young people, the Diocese of Columbus has enacted a complete program of protection. As part of this program, the Diocese of Columbus will provide appropriate, just, and pastoral care for anyone who has suffered the crime of sexual abuse of a minor at the hands of diocesan clergy or church employees or volunteers. The Diocese of Columbus will report any and all allegations of abuse reported to it to the authorities and will cooperate fully with those authorities.

Each parish must have a copy of the diocesan policy and procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests or deacons and have it readily available for parishioners and staff.



## 200.21

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### YOUTH PROTECTION

#### **DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS COMPLAINT FORM FOR ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR**

This form may be used to present allegations that a Priest, Deacon or Church employee, agent or volunteer has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor. The completed form is confidential and is to be submitted: Vicar General, Diocese of Columbus, 198 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43215, in a sealed envelope clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL.

#### **I. INFORMATION AS TO MINOR**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of Parent(s) or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school attending: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **II. INFORMATION AS TO THE ACCUSED**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Clergy    \_\_\_\_\_ Deacon    \_\_\_\_\_ Employee    \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer

Name and Address of place of employment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has accused been confronted or informed of allegation?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, when and by whom: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## 200.21 (Cont'd)

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### YOUTH PROTECTION

#### **III. INFORMATION AS TO ALLEGATIONS**

Brief description of alleged abuse (time, place and acts): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have the allegations been reported to any civil authorities or Church personnel? \_\_ Yes \_\_ No

If yes, when, how and to whom: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Reporting

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



## **200.30**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **ADULT CHAPERONES FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

Parishes must follow a strategy of “two-deep” ministry with adolescents, where at least two adults are present at all youth ministry activities and situations, wherever possible.

Where a one-to-one activity is required (e.g. counseling), such activities should take place in an open environment. Special attention should be given to provide a safe and confidential forum while following standards of prudence.

Adult chaperones for youth activities must be at least 21 years of age.

For youth ministry activities away from parish property, a ratio of one adult per ten youths must be followed. For overnight activities, a ratio of one adult per six youths must be followed. The ratio of male-to-female chaperones should closely parallel the ratio of male-to-female youths at an activity. This is particularly important for overnight activities.

For overnight activities where private rooms are used, an adult chaperone must never share a room with a youth. (Except where a parent is serving as a chaperone and there are no other persons sharing the room.)

No adult chaperone should ever enter a youth’s room unless it is absolutely necessary. If circumstances require it, the chaperone must be accompanied by another adult and the door must remain open the entire time the adults are present. Both adult chaperones should be of the same sex as the youth(s) in the room. If this is not possible, one male and one female chaperone may be used.

A youth must never be invited or instructed to enter the room of an adult chaperone.



■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

**YOUTH PROTECTION**

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COORDINATORS OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

1. Ecclesial & Theological

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry work collaboratively with the pastor (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
- b) Coordinators of youth ministry faithfully represent and practice the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law).
- d) Coordinators of youth ministry respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their own personal form of spirituality normative.

2. Inclusion

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- b) Coordinators of youth ministry serve all people without regard to gender, national origin, age, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political beliefs.
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry act to ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.

3. Accountability

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the diocesan bishop.
- b) Coordinators of youth ministry are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministry "...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently" (§ 231, Code of Canon Law.)
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding fiscal matters placed in their trust.



## **200.40 (cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### 4. Confidentiality

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.
- b) Coordinators of youth ministry adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of adolescents.

#### 5. Conduct

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry are aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- b) Physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between a coordinator of youth ministry and an adolescent are unethical and are prohibited.
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry model healthy and positive behaviors with adolescents.
- d) Procuring, providing, or using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with adolescents is unethical and is prohibited.

#### 6. Referrals and Intervention

- a) Coordinators of youth ministry are aware of the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect.
- b) Coordinators of youth ministry are aware of their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- c) Coordinators of youth ministry adhere to civil and ecclesial law, policy and procedure for reporting abuse, suspected abuse or neglect.



## 200.40 (cont'd)

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### YOUTH PROTECTION

#### 7. Parish/Diocesan Policies

a) Coordinators of youth ministry are aware of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of ethics and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **200.41**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS**

- Youth ministry team members work collaboratively with the pastor, coordinator of youth ministry (and/or other supervisors) and associates in ministry.
- Youth ministry team members faithfully represent and practice the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- Youth ministry team members are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities (§ 231, Code of Canon Law.)
- Youth ministry team members respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their own personal form of spirituality normative.
- Youth ministry team members recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- Youth ministry team members serve all people without regard to gender, national origin, age, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political beliefs.
- Youth ministry team members act to ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.
- Youth ministry team members are accountable to the pastor, coordinator of youth ministry, or other duly appointed representative, under the authority of the diocesan bishop.
- Youth ministry team members are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministry "...conscientiously, zealously, and diligently" (§ 231, Code of Canon Law.)
- Youth ministry team members exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding fiscal matters placed in their trust.
- Youth ministry team members respect confidentiality, yet are not held to confidentiality in the same way as ordained ministers and licensed, certified counselors.



## **200.41 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

- Youth ministry team members adhere to civil and ecclesial law concerning the reporting of neglect, abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.
- Youth ministry team members support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of adolescents.
- Youth ministry team members are aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- Physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between a youth ministry team member and an adolescent are unethical and are prohibited.
- Youth ministry team members model healthy and positive behaviors with adolescents.
- Procuring, providing, or using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with adolescents is unethical and is prohibited.
- Youth ministry team members are aware of the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect.
- Youth ministry team members are aware of their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- Youth ministry team members adhere to civil and ecclesial law, policy and procedure for reporting abuse, suspected abuse or neglect.
- Youth ministry team members are aware of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

I have read and understand the above code of ethics and commit to uphold this code in my ministry.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## 200.42

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### YOUTH PROTECTION

#### **YOUTH BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each youth ministry program should develop, publish, and update on a regular basis a code of conduct for participants. The code shall specify expectations for youth behavior. It should also indicate procedures, corrective measures, and penalties that the program may use for violations of these expectations. The code must safeguard the youth's right to due process.

Behavior is the manner in which one acts. Since the essence of Christian discipline is self discipline, youth must be free to choose one form of behavior over another. In choosing to behave or misbehave a youth takes upon him/herself the consequences of that chosen behavior.

1. In establishing a code of conduct the program shall:
  - a) ensure that the rules and consequences are understood by the youth
  - b) ensure that the punishments are pastorally constructive and relative to the misbehavior
  - c) encourage reconciliation with the offended party if applicable
2. Youth ministry team members shall uphold the code of conduct established for the program and follow the expectations, procedures, corrective measures and penalties regarding the program's rules.
3. Youth ministry team members shall be responsible for establishing an environment in which youth receive continuing instruction regarding acceptable behavior.
4. Since the Church supports the dignity of persons of all ages, corporal punishment in any form is never an acceptable form of punishment.
5. A person may use a physical response to "obtain possession of weapons or dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property." (Ohio Law 3319.41)

The code of conduct should be made available to youth participants, parent (s), or guardian (s) and the youth ministry team.



## **200.43**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **DISSEMINATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each youth ministry program shall make the parish community aware of the code of conduct for employees and volunteers and make this code of conduct readily available to any interested parishioner.



## **200.50**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **BEST PRACTICES FOR SCREENING ADULT VOLUNTEERS**

In addition to the policies outlined in policy #200.10, the following steps can help create and maintain a safe environment for both children and adults.

##### **1. Develop Policies and Procedures**

Comprehensive policies help ensure that potential volunteers are treated fairly and that procedures are used consistently. Policies also help to provide continuity to a program.

Parish policies might include information about how volunteers will be screened – whether by application, interview, or a combination – what kind and the minimum number of references that will be required. Additionally, evaluation, dismissal, separation, and grievance processes could be outlined.

##### **2. Create Volunteer Position Descriptions**

Detailed position descriptions allow potential volunteers to determine whether an opportunity fits their interests, skills, and schedule. Additionally, volunteer administrators may use the position description to screen candidates based upon the basic qualifications needed for placement, including a clean police record.

##### **3. Ask Volunteers to Complete an Application**

A thorough written application can be a valuable screening tool. An application can help determine a volunteer's attitudes toward children, child abuse, and volunteering in general. An application may ask for personal information including name, address, phone, e-mail, social security number; emergency contact information; recent employment/volunteer information; areas of interest and availability; driver's license/insurance information when appropriate; medical conditions or special needs; references; inquiries to past felonies and/or misdemeanors. Ask potential volunteers for their signature to affirm that they have given truthful information.



## **200.50 (Cont')**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **4. Conduct Interviews**

Conducting interviews can be especially helpful when placing individuals interested in volunteer positions. Effective interviewing techniques include open-ended questions, good listening skills, and a clear understanding of the questions interviewers are permitted to ask under existing federal and state regulations.

#### **5. Ask for References and/or Endorsements**

References help organizations confirm personal and professional information provided by the potential volunteer and offer an objective opinion of that person's qualifications. For activities that call for regular unsupervised access, organizations might require volunteers to give at least two non-related references. For decentralized activities, seeking endorsement/approval from a person who is well acquainted with the volunteer will provide additional information. It's important to document all contacts.



## **200.51**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **BEST PRACTICES FOR SCREENING AND MONITORING ADOLESCENT VOLUNTEERS**

##### **Introduction**

In many parishes, adolescents provide a substantial amount of service in programs for younger children. Service projects that provide babysitting for parents during the holidays or assistance with religious education classes or nurseries during Mass are just a few of the ways that adolescents serve parishes and learn about the responsibility of parish life. Often these projects are part of preparation for Confirmation.

However, it is important not to assume automatically that adolescents are “safe” just because of their participation in ministry. Research tells us that adolescents are a high risk group for sexual abuse of children. In fact, studies in the United States indicate that juveniles are responsible for 40 percent of the sexual assaults on children under the age of 6 and 39 percent of the attacks on children ages 11-16.[i] One study in the U.S. shows that 13 to 14 year olds are responsible for more than three times the number of sexual molestation cases of children under the age 12 than any other age group over 16.[ii]

Over the past several years, through *Protecting God's Children for Adults* sessions and our diocesan policies and audits, we have raised awareness about the need to screen adults before allowing them access to our children—and the need to screen and monitor those with access to children is not just confined to adults. We must pay attention to the adolescents who are caring for and ministering to our young children.

##### **Screening**

Many parishes are looking for guidance in their efforts to conduct thorough screening and meet the needs of ministry to all the children in the community. There is no easy way to screen adolescents. In fact, some traditional screening tools will not help when the applicant is an adolescent. We cannot conduct civilian criminal background checks on juveniles, for example.



## **200.51 (Cont')**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

Even those with convictions are protected from discovery through background checks and the record is wiped clean when the young person turns 18.

This means that it is essential that policies be established and enforced that govern the interactions between adolescents and the young people they serve. Traditional screening tools including applications, references (perhaps including letters of references from non-related adults who are familiar with the young person's character), and personal interviews are crucial parts to any effective screening process.

Parish policies and procedures must also take into account the limited ability to screen adolescent applicants. For example, require that a policy-compliant adult supervise all interactions, programs, and events involving adolescents and younger children. In addition, maintain a policy similar to the Boy Scouts' "two-deep leadership." Within a parish, this means that there be no less than two responsible adult leaders present with young people, and both of them must be compliant with all diocesan policies.

Establishing policies and going through the traditional application and interview processes can help parishes to establish a responsible process for screening adolescents who are involved in children's ministries.

#### **Training**

Because of the sensitive nature of the material, adolescents are not permitted to attend Protecting God's Children for Adults sessions. Parish leaders should work with adolescent volunteers to make them aware of parish and diocesan policies.

The *Protecting God's Children Quick Reference Guide* brochure should be shared with adolescent volunteers to make them aware of our plan to protect children and youth. When sharing information about child sexual abuse with adolescent volunteers, particular attention to the following will also be beneficial:

- The harm sexual abuse causes.
- The danger of dwelling on unhealthy fantasies.
- The importance of reporting suspected abuse, including abuse committed by a peer.



## **200.51 (Cont')**

□ POLICY

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### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **Warning Signs**

Some of the behavioral warning signs of risky adolescents are the same as those of risky adults. Additionally, the following signs are unique to the adolescent offender.

Risky adolescents may:

- Explore his or her own natural sexual curiosity with younger children or those of differing size, status, ability, or power. This means an adolescent may be more overtly sexual with young children.
- Focus on being with younger children rather than with their own peers. This adolescent spends an unusual amount of time with younger children when he or she could be with peers.
- Share “secret” places or hideaways with younger children or create and play “special” games with them that involve too much touching and demands for silence.
- Insist on physical contact with a child, even when the child resists the attention.

[i] Oliver, B. (2007) Child Abuse & Neglect, “Three steps to reducing child molestation by adolescents”, Vol 31, 683.

[ii] Ibid.

Based on *Screening and Monitoring Adolescent Volunteers*, by: Sharon Doty, J.D., M.H.R. and published by The National Catholic Risk Retention Group, 2008.



## **200.60**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **BEST PRACTICES FOR MONITORING YOUTH MINISTRY FACILITIES**

Child molesters look for ways to spend time alone with children. If they know someone is watching, they have more trouble finding opportunities to abuse without getting caught. The following steps can help create a safer environment for our children, youth, and adults.

- Identify secluded areas, lock empty rooms.
- Develop policies regarding use of secluded areas.
- Do not permit youth to enter staff-only areas.
- Only meet with youth where other adults can pass by.
- Supervisors should look in on activities.
- Make sure enough adult volunteers are present for all programs.
- Encourage parents to visit and participate in programs and activities.
- Do not start any new programs without approval from the pastor.



## **200.61**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **YOUTH MINISTRY GATHERINGS AT PRIVATE RESIDENCES**

Many well-intentioned employees and volunteers have a desire to open their homes to young people. Even with the best of intentions, this would put young people at risk by making it acceptable in the mind of a young person to enter the residence of an adult. This could later be exploited by another adult whose intentions are not altruistic.

It is the policy of the Catholic Diocese of Columbus that no parish or school sponsored youth ministry gatherings, events, or activities take place at private residences.

This policy is designed to protect both young people and adult youth ministry leaders. It ensures accessibility and transparency of our youth ministry programs and helps establish a safe environment for everyone involved.



## **200.70**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **PARENTAL OBSERVATION AND OTHER VISITORS**

Parents must be welcomed to observe all youth activities sponsored by the parish. While efforts should be made to create an environment where youth are comfortable expressing themselves, "...the right and duty of the parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable." (CCC 2221) Parents should never be denied the right to observe programs in which their children participate.

In an effort to provide a safe environment for all students, each parish shall have a written policy detailing the procedures visitors must follow when visiting a program. This policy must minimally address the following elements:

1. sign-in procedures,
2. advance notice necessary to observe an activity,
3. procedure for accompanying the visitor to and from observation area.



## **200.80**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUTH**

Each youth ministry program shall provide an organized program of health services designed to identify problems and coordinate health resources of the local community. Minimally the health services of the programs shall include:

- a) Procedures for dealing with immediate treatment of youth in cases of emergency. these procedures shall include providing the parent (s) or guardian (s) of youth with a written form for authorizing emergency medical treatment.
- b) Procedures for emergency situations: fire drills, or rapid dismissals, and tornado drills.
- c) Records of fire drills and seasonal tornado drills.
- d) Emergency procedures posted in meeting rooms and available to parents, youth, and youth ministry team members.
- e) Emergency telephone numbers posted by office telephones.
- f) Supervision of parish grounds, recreational areas, and other facilities when scheduled for use by youth.
- g) First aid facilities and materials.
- h) Keeping a file of written incident reports.



## **200.81**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH PROTECTION**

#### **THREATS TO WELFARE AND SAFETY**

No youth will use, possess, handle, transmit or conceal any object which is or can be considered a weapon or instrument of violence. Objects which are explosive or incendiary in nature, or any object reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of any person, are prohibited on parish premises, and at youth ministry functions.



## 200.82

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### YOUTH PROTECTION

#### **BULLYING**

The Diocese of Columbus youth ministry programs and their youth ministry teams shall not tolerate any bullying on parish grounds or at any program activity on or off site.

Bullying is a pattern of abuse over time and involves a student being “picked on”. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

The diocese expects youth ministry team members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a team member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report to the coordinator of youth ministry for further investigation.

The diocese expects youth and parents who become aware of an act of bullying on parish grounds or at any program activity on or off site to report it to the coordinator for further investigation. The coordinator will contact parents of the aggressor and the victim. This investigation may include interviews with youth, parents, team members, parish staff, and reviewing records.

Consequences for youth who bully others should include counseling, parent conference, and/or suspension from activities depending on the results of the investigation.



## **300.10**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

In this manual, the term “coordinator of youth ministry” pertains to any lay, religious, or cleric serving as youth ministry leaders. Depending on local needs, these ministers may be employed by a parish (full-time or part-time) or may serve the parish as a volunteer.

These individuals may conduct ministry under a variety of titles locally, including but not limited to coordinator of youth ministry, director of youth ministry, and/or parish youth minister.

Some pastoral associates, parish coordinators and other catechetical leaders may also share responsibility for youth ministry and as such may be considered youth ministry leaders, hereafter referred to as coordinator of youth ministry.



## **300.11**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

Coordinators of youth ministry should be appointed according to the procedures established by the Diocese of Columbus. Coordinators of youth ministry are hired by the pastor in consultation with local search committees.

Coordinators of youth ministry must always be qualified and well trained, as well as have an excellent reputation. He or she facilitates the people, programming, and resources of the parish community in a comprehensive ministry effort. The coordinator is primarily responsible for facilitating planning, administering programs, developing a leadership system for adult and youth leaders (recruitment, training, and support), and serving as an advocate and link for young people to the faith community and wider community.

To qualify as a candidate for a coordinator of youth ministry, a person must be an active, participating Catholic.



## **300.12**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **PROFESSIONALISM OF YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS**

In keeping with the moral values advanced by the teachings of Christ, the tenets of the Catholic Church, and the policies and regulations of the diocese, coordinators of youth ministry and youth ministry team members are expected to be examples of moral behavior and professionalism. Coordinators of youth ministry may be suspended or terminated for violations of these standards.

A written statement of the policies and regulations of the diocese must be available to coordinators of youth ministry and youth ministry team members.



## **300.13**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **CERTIFICATION OF THE COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

Coordinators of youth ministry are expected to obtain and maintain diocesan youth ministry certification.



## **300.14**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **SALARIES FOR LAY COORDINATORS OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

The salary paid to a lay coordinator of youth ministry in the Diocese of Columbus shall be determined by the pastor of the hiring parish. In arriving at salary figures, consideration should be given to the following factors:

Size of program;

- Distribution of administrative responsibilities;
- Academic credentials and certification;
- Number of years of service in present assignment;
- Number of years of service in the diocese;
- Number of years of service in youth ministry;
- Average increase for other parish ministry leaders;
- Salary figures of similar public program officials in the geographic area



## **300.15**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **ONGOING EDUCATION AND FORMATION**

All coordinators of youth ministry are expected to continue their personal, professional, and spiritual growth/development.

The diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry provides in-service opportunities for coordinators of youth ministry throughout the program year. Coordinators of youth ministry are expected to be present for those sessions and to assist in the planning and evaluation of diocesan-sponsored in-service days.

In addition to the above in-service opportunities, the program should budget for other professional growth activities such as the OCEA, the NCCYM, or a workshop or seminar of the coordinator of youth ministry's choice.



□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

**YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

**SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION - COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

The following is a job description for full-time coordinators of youth ministry. It is based on responsibility and accountability, as established through specific standards of performance. The specific standards of the coordinator of youth ministry have been categorized into four major areas. They are as follows:

**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT  
RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF LEADERS  
ADMINISTRATION  
COMMUNICATION**

**TITLE:** Coordinator of Youth Ministry

**REPORTS TO:** Pastor

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Responsible for developing a parish based pastoral ministry with youth. Reaches out to all youth in the community, provides for formal catechesis, invites, and enables youth to serve others. Develops close communication with and mutual support from families of youth and collaborates with other community and parish youth organizations. This position can be terminated at-will by the pastor or coordinator.

**I. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

- a. creates and develops core group and provides for its enrichment
- b. develops leadership skills in youth
- c. develops a network for reaching out to youth, particularly to the alienated
- d. is available for and has set times for listening, advising, and referral
- e. plans, coordinates and implements weekend retreats and evenings of prayer reflection
- f. develops the kind of relationship with parents that are conducive to open communication between parents and youth
- g. provides opportunity for youth to hear and respond to the Gospel message
- h. assists in the preparation of occasional liturgical celebrations for youth



## **300.16 (cont'd)**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **II. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF LEADERS**

- a. recruits, trains, assigns, and evaluates the youth leaders. Coordinates participation in diocesan sponsored training programs
- b. serves as an advisor and support to youth leaders
- c. monitors the efforts of volunteer leaders and evaluates progress
- d. makes special efforts to gain the endorsement, support, and involvement of all adults, especially parents and parish organizations
- e. defines the responsibilities of each adult leader/advisor
- f. publicizes and offers education programs and support systems for volunteer leaders

#### **III. ADMINISTRATION**

- a. initiates ways of gathering data on the needs, interests, attitudes and beliefs of youth
- b. plans, organizes, and implements programs/experiences that provide a holistic approach in meeting the needs/interests of youth
- c. submits annual financial report and budget; administers budget throughout the year
- d. maintains necessary office and program records, including a log of activities and time
- e. determines effective means for publicizing and promoting programs and experiences
- f. submits periodic reports to the pastor detailing programs in youth ministry
- g. initiates procedures for evaluating all aspects of the parish's ministry to youth

#### **IV. COMMUNICATION**

- a. keeps the parish faith community informed of youth ministry activity and goals
- b. advises, communicates and cooperates with other parish and diocesan organizations
- c. works with youth ministry team on goals and programmatic ideas for meeting needs
- d. participates in parish governing structures to insure greater participation of youth in parish life and to facilitate communication and decision-making
- e. supervises and coordinates scheduling of youth events and activities
- f. keeps informed through attendance at diocesan, regional, and national conferences,
- g. regular meetings, and membership in professional associations
- h. is aware of community agencies and resources that interface with youth
- i. sets annual goals and objectives for each Junior/Senior High program as requested



## **300.17**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE COORDINATOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

The coordinator of youth ministry is directly accountable to the pastor (or his representative) in fulfilling the coordinator of youth ministry's job description.

The coordinator of youth ministry is accountable to the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry, in implementing the policies and guidelines established in this manual.



## **300.20**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF VOLUNTEER YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS**

The ministry of Leadership Development calls forth, affirms, and enables the diverse gifts, talents, and abilities of adults and young people in our faith communities for comprehensive ministry with adolescents. Leadership roles in adolescent ministry are key. Leaders must be trained and encouraged. This approach involves a wide diversity of adult and youth leaders in a variety of roles. Many will be involved in direct ministry with adolescents; others will provide support services and yet others will link the ministry effort to the resources of the broader community.

A volunteer youth ministry team, made up of adults and young people, may be formed to work with the ministry coordinator in organizing a comprehensive ministry with adolescents by planning the overall ministry, developing a leadership system, identifying the resources of the faith community, and connecting the ministry with the other ministries and programs of the faith community.

Within the Diocese of Columbus, volunteer youth ministry team members are to be recruited without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, disability, or national origin. No age requirements may be in place to discourage older adults or parents from being team members.

All youth ministry team members must be active, participating Catholics.



## **300.21**

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### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE FOR CATECHESIS**

Youth ministry team members in the diocese who provide catechesis (catechists) must possess or be working toward advanced religious education certification from the Office of Religious Education and Catechesis.



■ POLICY

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**YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

**HARASSMENT POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS**

1. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any parish activity, and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasiums, or even at programs sponsored by the parish at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics.

It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. **No youth participant, volunteer adult leader, or parish staff member - male or female - should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.**

2. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - > Offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
  - > Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
  - > Explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his or her appearance;
  - > The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
  - > Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
  - > Graffiti of a sexual nature;
  - > Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
  - > Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.



## 300.30 (Cont'd)

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL

3. Sex harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature - it also includes harassment that is based on **gender**. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman by or as a female body part, or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which are based upon race, color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and volunteers must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personnel or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, development, program evaluation, participation in parish programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or achievement.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a coach hugging a student after an accomplishment, a youth minister consoling an adolescent with an injury or physical conduct during athletic events would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

4. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a parish employee, volunteer, youth participant, or visitor to the parish activity.



## **300.30 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

5. Any person who believes he/she was subjected to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact either the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor, or (c) diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a program administrator or a pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.
6. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any program administrator, volunteer, or staff engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.
7. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.



## **300.30 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **PARISH RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Periodically each parish shall give staff and volunteers a copy of the Harassment Policy. It is recommended that a Harassment Policy Verification Form be signed and returned.
2. Each parish program shall follow diocesan procedures for timely investigation and response to complaints.
3. Each parish shall periodically train program administrators, staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment, the prevention of harassment, and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior. Records are to be kept of training dates and names of those in attendance.
4. Each parish program shall include the Harassment Policy in materials distributed to the program's staff/volunteers.



## 300.30 (Cont'd)

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL

#### HARASSMENT POLICY VERIFICATION FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
please print your name

- (check one)     an employee of \_\_\_\_\_
- an adult volunteer at \_\_\_\_\_
- a parent/guardian of a youth participant

have received copies of the diocesan policy on harassment.

I understand that it is necessary that any complaint of harassment must be filed in writing with the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor or (c) diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry. I have had an opportunity to read the policy and am confident I understand the content and purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_  
name of parish and program

\_\_\_\_\_  
your signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

**YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

**HARASSMENT POLICY FOR YOUTH AND ADOLESCENT VOLUNTEERS**

1. **Harassment** is defined as verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses cuts down, or shows hostility toward a person because of his or her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability (and other characteristics protected by law).

Harassment can take many forms and can occur at any parish activity. It can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasiums, or even at youth programs off-site.

It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a safe environment free from all forms of harassment and intimidation. No one (youth or adult) should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct of any kind.

2. **Sexual harassment** is unwelcome attention of a sexual nature. It may take different forms, including:

- Inappropriate touching (brushing up against, grabbing, patting, or pinching in a sexual manner.)
- Making comments about a person's body, clothing, or sexual behavior
- Spreading sexual rumors about someone
- Continually asking someone out when they have communicated a lack of interest
- Making sexual jokes, gestures, or remarks (in person or in "cyberspace" – instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms, etc)
- Intimidation (blocking or cornering someone in a sexual way)
- Assault (pulling clothing off or down, forcing someone to do something sexual such as kissing)
- Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others

3. **Gender Harassment.** Sex harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature; it also includes harassment that is based on a person's gender. An example would be referring to a girl by a female body part or a demeaning sex-based term. This behavior is prohibited. Treating people differently because of their gender is prohibited.



## **300.31 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

4. **Hostile environment harassment** occurs when unwelcome sexual conduct is so severe and pervasive (repeated) that it limits a person's ability to benefit from or enjoy the parish program or activity. A sexually hostile environment can be created by anyone: a parish employee, adult volunteer, youth volunteer, youth participant or a visitor to the parish activity.

5. If a youth sees harassment of any kind occurring (no matter who the harasser is—student, visitor, catechist, etc.,) they should immediately tell a trusted adult staff member or volunteer so that they can intervene and begin the appropriate reporting steps as outlined in diocesan policy.

6. If a youth believes he/she is a victim of sexual harassment, he should tell a trusted adult (youth minister, pastor, director of religious education or a parent) to file a formal complaint.

Symptoms of a victim of sexual harassment may include:

- ❖ Feel angry, embarrassed, frustrated, scared or depressed
- ❖ Feel hopeless to stop the harassment
- ❖ Not feel good about yourself
- ❖ Fear that your reputation will be destroyed
- ❖ Go out of your way to avoid the harasser(s)
- ❖ Experience headaches, stomach aches, or sleeping or eating problems because of the stress caused by the harassment

7. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action as outlined in diocesan policy.

8. Retaliation against or “getting even” with anyone who reports harassment will not be tolerated. The diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.



## **300.31 (Cont'd)**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **PARISH RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Periodically each parish shall give staff and volunteers a copy of the Harassment Policy. It is recommended that a Harassment Policy Verification Form be signed and returned.
2. Each parish program shall follow diocesan procedures for timely investigation and response to complaints.
3. Each parish shall periodically train program administrators, staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment, the prevention of harassment, and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior. Records are to be kept of training dates and names of those in attendance.
4. Each parish program shall include the Harassment Policy in materials distributed to the program's staff/volunteers.



## 300.31 (Cont'd)

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL

#### **Harassment Policy for Youth and Adolescent Volunteers Verification Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ a youth participant or volunteer with \_\_\_\_\_  
please print your name name of parish/school  
have received and read the diocesan Harassment Policy for Youth and Adolescent Volunteers.

I understand that:

- Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, cuts down, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability.
- Sexual harassment is unwelcome attention of a sexual nature.
- Gender harassment is based on a person's gender. An example would be referring to a girl by a female body part.
- Hostile environment is when unwelcome sexual conduct is so severe and pervasive that it limits a person's ability to benefit from a parish activity
- Sexual harassment is against the law and against diocesan policy.
- Retaliation (getting even with) someone who reports harassment is against the law and against diocesan policy.

If I am a victim of harassment, I can tell a trusted adult without fear of retaliation or getting into trouble.

I agree to not participate in any form of harassment while I volunteer or participate in parish/school activities.

I agree to immediately report any harassment I may witness to a trusted adult leader in my parish program so that they may take the appropriate actions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
name of parish activity



## **300.40**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

#### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

All programs in the Diocese of Columbus operate on the principle of subsidiarity in relationships and structure. Therefore, disagreements or complaints should be dealt with and solutions sought at the lowest possible level. This means those persons involved in the disagreement or complaint should seek to reconcile differences in a conference setting. Since the goal in these situations is to achieve a reconciliation of differences, and so that an adversarial situation does not occur, no legal counsel for either party will be permitted to attend said conference. This applies to all conferences through and including those held at the diocesan level.



## **400.10**

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GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS THAT COMMUNICATE PROGRAM RULES AND POLICIES**

Local policy must always be in alignment with diocesan policies.

Materials used to communicate local and diocesan policies will be reviewed and revised as needed. Such materials will be published and distributed.



## **400.11**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM AND THE PARISH COMMUNITY**

Each youth ministry program shall have a plan for communicating the program's philosophy, mission, policies, and activities to the parish community.



## **400.12**

□ POLICY

■ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **COMMUNICATING PROGRAM RULES AND POLICIES**

Each youth ministry program should regularly publish and distribute materials (e.g. handbooks, letters, brochures, handouts, etc.) to assist both the parents and youth in becoming knowledgeable about program rules and policies. The materials should address, but are not limited to, the following items. The materials can cite or include the appropriate diocesan policy.

- child custody issues
- code of conduct
- crisis plan
- dispensing medication
- drug and substance abuse
- harassment
- mission and belief statements
- personally identifiable information release notice
- pregnancy policy
- publishing youth information
- violent acts
- safe environment standards



## **400.20**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS PROCEDURES**

##### **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As a general rule, pastors and coordinators of youth ministry are responsible for routine public relations for their programs. Exceptions to this rule include matters relating to diocesan actions or decisions.

Examples of matters to be handled by the diocese are:

1. Decisions or actions by the bishop, episcopal moderator for education, diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry, or the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.
2. Decisions or actions of diocesan task groups and committees.

##### **CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS**

The diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry will be informed by the pastor or coordinator of youth ministry as soon as facts indicate a potential or actual public relations problem. (If the diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry or episcopal moderator for education is not available, the pastor or coordinator of youth ministry will contact the diocesan Communications Office directly.)

The Communications Office is solely responsible for providing any public statements or releases in crisis situations.



## **400.21**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **OUTSIDE SPEAKERS**

Coordinators of youth ministry must consult with and receive approval from the pastor (or his representative) before inviting an outside speaker to a program.

The pastor (or his representative) and coordinator of youth ministry are responsible for guests who visit a program and speakers who address youth, either individually or in a group.



## 400.22

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **RELATIONS WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY AGENCIES: FIRE DRILLS**

1. The State Fire Marshall strictly urges that fire drills in buildings be of a surprise nature. A record of the drills shall be kept by the coordinator of youth ministry.
2. When the fire alarm is sounded, everyone in the building shall leave.
3. As soon as the coordinator of youth ministry is certain that all youth have left the room, the coordinator of youth ministry shall close the doors as he/she leaves.
4. The youth shall walk. Talking shall not be permitted as the youth leave the building.
5. The coordinators of youth ministry shall move to predesignated positions at a safe distance from the building.
6. As soon as the youth are stationed, the coordinator of youth ministry shall take a count of all youth present.
7. The coordinator of youth ministry or a person delegated by the coordinator of youth ministry shall stand near the main entrance of the building. As quickly as the count is made, the coordinator of youth ministry shall be notified that all youth have been accounted for. If a youth is missing, that information shall be relayed to the coordinator of youth ministry.
8. When the first fire company arrives, the coordinator of youth ministry will inform them as to whether or not all youth have been accounted for. If a youth is missing, the coordinator of youth ministry will notify the officer and tell him/her in what part of the building the youth is likely to be.
9. Youth shall be trained to use an alternate exit route in case the regular route is blocked.
10. Handicapped youths shall be cared for by some designated responsible person.
11. Every unplanned sounding of the fire alarm must be reported to the Fire Department, by telephone, immediately, to get the fire fighters to the building.



## **400.30**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

All drivers and vehicles used for transporting young people must be in full compliance with the policies set forth in the *Diocesan Financial Policy Manual*. All drivers must also be in full compliance with diocesan safe environment policies.



## **400.31**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

A field trip is defined as a parish sponsored activity supervised by parish personnel and/or adult volunteers which occurs off site.

No youth may participate unless a signed parent permission form for the specific event is received by the parish prior to the field trip. A standardized permission form is available from the diocese.

Whenever possible, bus transportation should be provided. If a private passenger vehicle is used, all drivers and vehicles must be in full compliance with the *Diocesan Financial Policy Manual*.



## **400.32**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Trips taken by groups of youth which extend during the evening and require staying overnight are subject to the approval of the pastor or his representative.

Approval may only be given when such an event supplements or enriches parish programs, e.g. retreat experiences, youth conferences, etc.

The directives in Policy 400.31 - Field Trips also apply to overnight trips.



## **400.40**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

All accounts and financial procedures must be in full compliance with the policies set forth in the *Diocesan Financial Policy Manual*.



## 400.41

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY FACILITIES**

The parish's youth ministry facilities shall support the diocesan philosophy and goals of youth ministry, and promote a healthy formation of Catholic youth. All youth ministry programs shall be held in suitable locations appropriate for parish activities.

All facilities in full compliance with the policies set forth in the *Diocesan Financial Policy Manual*.



## 400.50

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **DRUG PREVENTION**

For the purpose of this policy, “drugs” shall mean:

1. Any drug of abuse as defined in Ohio Revised Code §3719.011 (which includes any controlled substance, any harmful intoxicant and any dangerous drug as those terms are further defined in the Ohio Revised Code);
2. All alcoholic beverages;
3. All tobacco products;
4. Any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in program has been granted;
5. Anabolic steroids;
6. Cocaine, crack cocaine, LSD, hashish, opiates, narcotic drugs and marihuana;
7. Any substance that is a “look-alike” to any of the above, or is a counterfeit controlled substance as defined in Ohio Revised Code §2925.01(O).

(See policy 5141.0 regarding prescribed medication)

The term “drug paraphernalia” shall have the meaning set forth in Ohio Revised Code §2925.14(A).

Parishes are encouraged to develop drug prevention programs that:

- a. Emphasize the prevention of drug use;
- b. Provide for a comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally-based alcohol and other drugs education and prevention program;
- c. Include a clear statement that disciplinary sanctions as determined by the parish, will be imposed on program participants who violate the program standards of conduct and a description of those standards;
- d. Provide information about alcohol and other drug counseling and rehabilitation programs available to youth and their parent(s) and or guardian(s).

The use, possession, concealment, manufacture, administering, dispensing or distribution of any drug or drug paraphernalia, or committing any “drug abuse offense” as defined in Ohio Code §2925.01, or appearance while under the influence of any drug, on parish premises, in vehicles used to transport to a youth ministry event, or at any youth ministry sponsored event is prohibited.



## **400.50 (Cont'd)**

POLICY

GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Anyone who is committing any act prohibited by this policy shall be brought to the attention of the pastor or the pastor's designated representative.

The pastor or representative shall place student safety as a priority in each situation. The pastor or representative shall notify this youth's parent(s) or guardian(s) immediately.

The youth ministry program policy shall address prevention, intervention, and treatment. Youth ministry programs shall develop local policies regarding the consequences of the use, concealment, or distribution any drug or drug related paraphernalia. These policies shall include the consequences for first time and repeat offenders. The first time offender is required to meet with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) and parish officials.

Any reference to an Ohio Revised Code section in this policy shall also refer to any subsequent Ohio statute of like tenor and effect.



## **400.51**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO YOUTH**

A youth using prescribed medication during a youth ministry activity must have on file a signed medical authorization form from the parent or guardian, and a properly completed physician's statement. The authorization must include the following:

1. Written permission from the parent (s) or guardian (s).
2. A physician's verification of the necessity for the medication; name of medication; dosage; times or intervals at which it is to be taken; duration; and possible side effects.
3. Medication must be in original containers and have affixed label including youth's name.
4. Accurate records of the medication given must be kept filed.
5. A statement releasing and holding parish personnel harmless from any and all liability for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the presence of the medication during the activity or its use by the youth.

The possession or use of non-prescription, over-the-counter medication during activities is discouraged. Administration of these medications (i.e. throat lozenges, acetaminophen drugs...such as Tylenol and Datriil) should be determined on the local level, if the parish determines that adequate team members are available, and as long as appropriate permission forms are on file. The parish will not administer aspirin to youth because of its connection to Reye's Syndrome.

Coordinators of youth ministry are permitted to administer prescribed medication to a youth when conditions exist, which in the judgment of the coordinator, merit giving assistance to the youth (e.g., immaturity of the youth, nature of the medication). Coordinators of youth ministry are not required to administer medication to students.

At the discretion of the pastor, the coordinator of youth ministry may require that medication be kept by youth ministry team members until the youth needs to use it.



## **400.52**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **TEEN PREGNANCY**

Given our current circumstances, it is possible that a participant in a parish youth ministry program may face the challenges related to teen pregnancy.

Any determination concerning the continuing participation in youth ministry activities by a pregnant youth shall be made by the youth and their parents in consultation with the youth minister and pastor. Written notice of a doctor's determination concerning participation shall be provided upon request to the coordinator of youth ministry.

The religious instruction given in a youth ministry program should make clear that any act involving procreation is the exclusive right of those who are married. Likewise, catechesis on the Church's consistent stand in defense of human life must also be incorporated.

If, in the case of an unmarried youth, the youth ministry team has an attitude of compassion rather than approval, and if the youth ministry program offers appropriate religious instruction, there is every reasonable hope that the attitude of the youth participants will, likewise, be a rational and Christian one.

At this time in their lives, youth involved in a pregnancy need Christian acceptance, compassion and counsel. It is the Christian community's responsibility to give support and aid to those involved. Professional counseling for the expectant parents is strongly recommended.



## **400.53**

■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **AIDS**

The Diocese of Columbus recognizes that AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and/or symptomatic or asymptomatic infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a life-threatening disease and a major health issue. The epidemic proportions of this disease prompted the diocese to adopt a policy which seeks protection of the rights and welfare of all students and staff.

#### **Attendance**

In keeping with the recommendations of the Surgeon General's Report each case of a youth with HIV/or AIDS shall be dealt with individually. Youth who are diagnosed as having HIV/or AIDS remain in the normal youth ministry program as their illness allows.

#### **Confidentiality**

The Diocese recognizes the dignity and rights of all persons and is sensitive and responsive to the concerns of those who have HIV/or AIDS. Information concerning the health of any youth with HIV/or AIDS shall be treated as confidential.

#### **Procedure**

Because adolescents with HIV/or AIDS are highly susceptible to infections from other youth, the Surgeon General's report recommends that the program involve an AIDS evaluation team in the medical evaluation of infected students. The report further recommends that the youth's physician, a public health official (or physician specializing in factious diseases) and the youth's parent (s) or guardian (s) collaborate with the designated program officials (pastor, coordinator of youth ministry, and appropriate youth ministry team members) in conducting the evaluation. Based upon the recommendations of the evaluation team, the program's administration shall permit the student to remain active in youth ministry events under restricted conditions.